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ABSTRACT

The report speaks of elementary and secondary education in Ethiopia in terms of its history and cultural setting, and then relates the facts to the present situation in terms of learning opportunities, rural development, and the prevailing attitudes among the people in regard to education. Discussions cover the educational role of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, the beginning of modern education with the opening of the first public school in 1906 by Emperor Menelik II, the effect on Ethiopian education of the power struggle which followed Menelik's death and World War I; and, in 1941, with independence, the challenge of starting the development and expansion of schools almost from scratch. Also, a historical comparison of the policies and attitudes of church education and modern education is made. The remaining discussions cover the comprehensive high school, the teacher training institutes, the problem of dropouts, the change of attitudes and rural development, and the enrollment and dropout figures for Ethiopia. Two figures showing elementary and secondary school enrollment data and a 9-entry bibliography are also included. (FF)

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EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA IN ITS HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

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EDUCATION IN ETHIOPIA IN ITS HISTORICAL AND CULTURAL CONTEXT

In order to give the reader a true picture of education, it seems quite proper to speak of education in Ethiopia in terms of its history and cultural setting, and then relate the facts to the present situation in terms of learning opportunities, rural development, and the prevailing attitudes among the people in regard to education. As a person reads this paper, he can compare and contrast education in Ethiopia with education in his own country or with an education system which he knows best. I am doing this because I assume that the reader knows more about his own system of education than does the writer, which enables him to make more reasonable comparison and contrast after he is given the facts. Therefore, I will confine myself to education in Ethiopia except for general comments in regard to similarities of problems of international education.

Church Education

It is not exactly known when the Ethiopian Orthodox Church assumed the responsibility of educating the youth, but it was the only educational institution for a long time. Probably the church was charged with the task of education soon after Christianity was

introduced to Ethiopia during the Fourth Century. We can assume that some kind of education has been going on since then in some parts of the country.

The church did not have any written curriculum and its teaching was primarily oral. In a real sense, a school curriculum should be the content of teaching rather than the curriculum guide, and what the church offered was understood by teachers and students orally through the church tradition. The teachers (mostly priests and persons associated with the priesthood) knew what to teach, when to teach, and how to teach a given subject. Students knew what to expect during their church school years, though they did not have defined schedules class by class and period by period. In church schools, the children were not divided into grades; often children in the same room were at different levels of achievement and teachers taught according to those levels. It seems that without knowing about the theory of individualized instruction, the church schools did put it into practice. Also, students in the upper levels helped the ones in the lower levels to achieve literacy.

The church education can be roughly classified into advanced and elementary education. The elementary education deals with the teaching of literacy (reading and writing in Geez script, now known as Amharic script). For some church schools, literacy was and still is

just the ability to read. Ethiopian church schools never taught the third R. The church school teachers concentrated on teaching the Amharic script orally and then the reading of the Gospel and other religious books in the Geez language, which is still the official language of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. Writing was not highly esteemed because it was meant for people who sit down and copy the Bible on sheepskin which was used by church scribes. As a result, there were many people who could read but were unable to write. Students mainly memorized the Psalms of David, the Gospels, stories about saints, and some of the church rituals, as well as church etiquette and morals. Recitations were made individually and also in groups. In most cases, there were no standard textbooks and teachers imparted what they knew orally.

The advanced education offered by the church schools included ecclesiastical education, philosophy, theology, history, poetry, and ritual of the liturgy. Some monasteries also offered cannon and civil law. Sometimes different monasteries specialized in different fields of study, so that "an eminent prelate will probably have spent many years at various monastic seminaries perfecting his education."[1]

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[1] Education in Ethiopia, A survey issued by the Ministry of Education and Fine Arts of Ethiopia (Addis Ababa, 1961), pp. 4-5.

Apart from teaching these subjects, the church was responsible for a long time for safeguarding the culture and tradition of the country, but also played an active role in Ethiopian politics. Emperors, kings, and local rulers in Ethiopia had to depend on the support of the church for the loyalty of the people.

In Ethiopia the traditional church student was like a gypsy; he used to wear his sheepskin and beg for a living on his way to one of the monasteries and also during his stay in school. It was an accepted practice for a student to collect alms while going to school. This does not sound very much like a scholarship grant, but this was the way a church student subsidized whatever he could get from the church and from his parent. Grown up students, which most church school students were, lived at the church schools or at the monastic seminaries until they completed their education and went out to teach or until they started serving the church as ordained priests. Let us postpone the comparison of traditional church education and modern education until later on, and proceed with the development and expansion of education.

Beginning of Modern Education

What might be called the first modern public school in Ethiopia was opened in Addis Ababa in 1906 by Emperor Menelik II. Since Ethiopia did not have educated nationals of her own, she had to depend

on foreign personnel. In Ethiopia, for a long time teaching had been associated with religion, and whenever the people encountered foreign teachers they thought the foreigners came to change their religion. Since Emperor Menelik knew that this attitude prevailed among the people, when he first introduced modern education to Ethiopia he employed Orthodox Copts from Egypt because he thought that these people of the same religion would be accepted by the Ethiopians.

The fact that foreigners were suspected of changing the religion of the people also has another historical precedence. When the Portuguese came to Ethiopia to help against Islamic invasion of the country during the 16th century, Catholic missionaries tried to change the religion of the Orthodox people to Roman Catholicism. Robert Hess says, ". . . Alfonso Mendes decided to press forward and forcibly Romanize Ethiopian Christianity. Persecution of Monophysite believers became the order of the day at a time when Ethiopia could ill afford the luxury of religious discussion."[1] Because of these and other similar experiences, the attitude of the people toward foreign teachers in particular and toward foreigners in general was and still is different from the attitude of most other Africans. When European

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[1]Robert L. Hess, Ethiopia - The Modernization of Autocracy, University of Illinois at Chicago Circle (Ithaca, N. Y., and London: Cornell University Press, 1970), p. 46.

missionaries come to African countries, Africans primarily think of them that they come to take away their land. For the great majority of Ethiopians, foreigners come almost always to change their religion; even after Italian occupation of 1936-1941 this attitude did not change much, though now the people might think of both land and religion.

Emperor Menelik, then, was not only faced with the problem of building schools and bringing teachers from foreign countries, but also charged with the task of changing the attitude of the people in regard to education, which was even more difficult. He had to convince the public that education is necessary for their children and that they have to send their children to school. Sometimes the Emperor ordered the people to send their children to school, but it was not easy to do so. Emperor Menelik initiated modern education and encouraged the expansion of church schools to public sectors.

Apart from trying to expand modern public schools in Ethiopia, Emperor Menelik granted permission to Swedish Evangelical missionaries (Protestant) and French Capucins (Catholic - already had established schools in Harar) to begin educational activities in Addis Ababa. In his efforts to expand secular education in Ethiopia, Emperor Menelik went to the extent of preparing legislation to make school attendance "compulsory for all boys over 12 years old." This seems a revolutionary move on the part of the Emperor; even now, the Ethiopian

government does not have any implemented compulsory legislation for children even to attend elementary schools; this is due to lack of schools to accomodate all the children who want to go to school. It seems that Emperor Menelik did not want to make education compulsory for all children because he knew that there would not be enough schools and the choice over 12 years of age seems to indicate that he wanted to build schools within a walking distance for boys above this age. In the rural Ethiopia today, there are not enough schools within walking distance, even if we accept two hours of walking distance as a maximum limit. We have to notice also that the legislation the Emperor wanted did not include girls because he knew that parents would not cooperate with him - or it could mean that the Emperor himself did not believe in education of women. The tendency to send to school only boys continued for a long time, and even today many parents are reluctant to send their daughters to school.

Education - Internal and External Problems

The death of Emperor Menelik in 1913, internal power struggle after his death, and the first World War retarded the expansion of schools. The second public school in Addis Ababa was not opened until 1925, though enrollment in Menelik II School was expanding. Boys, especially of local chiefs, were coming from the provinces to attend

school in Addis Ababa. The church schools were encouraged by the regent (the present Emperor Haile Selassie) to expand and improve their instruction so that what they taught was relevant to the situation of the time. After 1925 more schools were opened in Addis Ababa and in the provinces.

While education was at this stage, the Italian invasion took place in 1935 and Italy occupied Ethiopia from 1936-1941. This was a great drawback for the development and expansion of education. The Italians were concentrating on the building of roads in order to bring the whole country under the Italian rule. They did not have enough time to worry about extending Italian language and culture through education. They wanted to do the first thing first; i. e., completion of military occupation before deliberately trying to influence the culture and tradition of Ethiopia. However, this does not mean that the Italians did not have any cultural influence on Ethiopia. When two languages and two cultures come in contact, inevitably they do influence each other; especially, the influences of the occupiers would be greater because there is a tendency by the occupied people to think of the occupiers' ways of life as "superior." Quite a few Ethiopians learned the Italian language in order to live with the Italians, and this definitely influenced Ethiopian languages.[1]

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[1]For further information read Habte Moriam Markos, Italian Variety in Ethiopia, Language Survey of Ethiopia, 1970.

The continuation of school expansion was halted by the occupation. Among the few who were educated before the Italian invasion, some went to exile in the various neighboring countries and others as far as Jerusalem and England. Others joined the guerrilla force in rural Ethiopia and those who cooperated with the Italians were busy helping them with war propaganda.

New Challenge and New Policies

In 1941, with independence came a great challenge of starting the development and expansion of schools almost from scratch. Most of the educated Ethiopians were killed during the war. The few who survived the guerrilla warfare and those who returned from exile were charged with the task of establishing a new government and they had to work in the different ministries. Again Ethiopia had to depend on foreign educators.

This historical event brought some changes in education policies. Before the Italian occupation, the main foreign language was French. This was so mostly for two reasons: (1) French was considered to be the "international language of diplomacy" at that time; (2) Ethiopia had economic and political connections with France, the most visible one being the Franco-Ethiopian Railway which runs from Djibute to Addis Ababa. One of the major policy changes in education,

mostly because of Britain's involvement in the war between Italy and Ethiopia, was the fact that English became the medium of instruction in Ethiopian schools and the second important language in Ethiopia. (The official language is Amharic.) English also became Ethiopia's medium for international communication. More and more young people started going to Britain and the United States for further education. Also, teachers mainly came from Britain, the United States, and Egypt.

Church Education and Modern Education

Before we go into the discussion of school situations at present, it may be beneficial to briefly compare and contrast church schools with modern schools, in terms of their purpose and the attitudes of the people toward education.

The church schools were not a good take-off point for modern education, because their aims were different. In fact, church schools hindered the progress of needed change of attitudes by advocating the old system, and Orthodox Christianity played a crucial role in a supposedly secular education. The basic similarity between the two systems seems to be that both prepare students for white collar jobs. It is the church schools which set a bad example for the rejection of blue collar jobs, apart from the negative attitude of the people in traditional Ethiopia toward such jobs.

The church students went to school basically for religious reasons and personal satisfaction, without any aspiration for material rewards. A church school teacher teaches in order to fulfill his obligation to his faith and his God. Students learn to know more about their faith and humanity (there were no scientific offerings by the church) and to educate others in turn, mainly for self-fulfillment and religious obligations. The persons who got advanced church education were not aspiring for material rewards. Anyway, since almost all of the occupations that were available in Ethiopia were hereditary and did not require any training, there was very little to aspire for. The sons of nobility (the traditional rulers of the country) got elementary education in church schools so that they could read and write in Geez and Amharic languages, but they did not go for further education because such education was not necessary and those who went for advanced church education belonged to the priesthood. Though the nobility had always to cooperate with the church in order to rule, as already mentioned, the nobility always associated higher education with priesthood, which it considered to be one step lower than the nobility. Naturally, you would not go for further education to be a step lower in status. In other words, education was not necessary for political elites of the country.

In Ethiopia, nobility, priesthood, and peasantry were the three respected classes, whereas all others were despised. The despised occupations were blacksmith, weaving, tanning, and pottery-making. These trades were also hereditary. In fact, for the people in the despised occupations it was quite difficult to move to one of the other classes, whereas some kind of flexibility was possible among the first three groups; i. e., the son of a farmer could be a priest or a ruler occasionally, whereas it is hardly possible for a son of a weaver to become a ruler or a priest. Apart from this occasional shift of class, people generally stuck to the profession of their fathers.

Though the political elites in the higher echelon of the structure of the Ethiopian government remained the traditional nobility, with modern education came basic changes in regard to shifting professions and change of status. The son of anyone who got an education started working for the government. Since the work of the government demanded more skill than the traditional leaders had, there was a shift in emphasis from the right to lead by the virtue of birth to the right to lead because of one's education. As Ethiopia's international contact increased, more and more educated people rose to power because of their education. Especially people who were in schools abroad during the Italian occupation rose to prominent positions in the government. Certainly it still takes longer for a son of a peasant to climb the social

ladder than it takes a son of nobility of similar education. Many have succeeded in climbing the social ladder because of their education and many more will do so in the future. It is since 1941 more than ever before that education can change the profession and the status of a person. It was after that date that education became the determining factor as to who gets the job with the government and private organizations, as well as who will be promoted.

The fact that up until recently government absorbed anyone who got some kind of schooling, created an attitude among the people that anybody who dropped out of school should be able to get a job with the government. Now, positions which used to be filled with elementary and high school dropouts some 15 years ago, are being filled with people who have college education, because government now needs people with different skills more than just literacy and numeracy which were the only requirement in the past. Many of the school dropouts who joined government organizations were quite successful in climbing social ladders. Most of them started out with clerical positions and worked their way up without further education.

Schools and Frustration of Youth

The success of these people seems to have created frustration for present high school dropouts and graduates as well as their parents,

because they fail to see that things have changed a great deal. They keep comparing themselves with their elders who were successful with very little education. In other words, the situation in Ethiopia has changed, whereas the attitudes and the expectations of the people remain the same. The reader might think at this time that elementary school dropouts are too young to get jobs. This is not quite so, because students, especially in the rural areas, when they start going to school are much older than the usual elementary school age children. Due to lack of schools in rural areas, sometimes children do not start going to school until they are 10, 11, or 12 years old. This means that even if they drop out from grades five or six they are old enough to work. Furthermore, since most children of school age stayed at home during the Italian occupation, older boys started going to school after restoration in 1941 and this meant many of the children who went to school at that time were at least five years older than the children who enroll in grade one elsewhere in the world.

The difference in the level of expectation between church school students in the past and students in public schools at present is very great. The church school students went to school for religious reasons, personal satisfaction, and search for knowledge, with very little material reward on the part of individual students, at least, though churches got land grants from the government, from which

some of the graduates of church schools could benefit. Ethiopian students who go to public schools now are there with the expectation of material rewards to be provided by the government.

Almost all the students who go to school also want white collar jobs. This is partly the attitude that has been carried out from the traditional Ethiopian society which despised people who work with their hands. This attitude is in direct conflict with what Ethiopia needs for development. Some of the things she needs are more technicians and more agricultural experts who are willing to work with farmers in the field by using their skills and hands to bring about higher agricultural output. This type of attitude has also something to do with some of the religious teachings. The church taught the people too much dependence on birth and luck. You have to be born from a rich family or be lucky. Education has to play an important role in changing this kind of attitude and help the people to believe in work rather than in birth and luck.

Education has to change the whole fatalistic philosophy that things are the way they are because God wanted it to be that way and it is God alone that can change them. Education should teach the people of their ability to change things.

Comprehensive High Schools

The Ministry of Education realized that there is a need for basic policy change. Since the academic high school education did not give high school graduates the skills needed for employment, and since only less than twenty percent of high school graduates join the university, the Ministry of Education turned the former academic high schools into comprehensive high schools. Apart from this, the country needs, for the development of her potential resources, skilled persons in different fields without college education. The basic idea behind the comprehensive high school, then, was to give students who will not go to college skills which will enable them to be employed without a college degree.

However, the comprehensive high schools have their own problems. Most of them, especially those which are located in the rural areas, lack trained teachers and the necessary facilities in order to give effective training. There are only very few teachers who can teach technical and commercial subjects and those who can teach do not have the facilities. For example, teachers who are assigned to teach secretarial subjects find that typewriters are not available in the schools. Therefore, the comprehensive high schools in effect remained academic high schools because very few of the comprehensive

high schools give enough training in technical, commercial, and agricultural subjects which will qualify individuals for employment. As a result of this,almost all students in the comprehensive high schools prepare themselves to go to college. However, there are some specialized schools in Addis Ababa, Asmara, Bahir Dar which prepare students for employment, and graduates from these schools can easily find jobs. The technical and commercial schools in Addis Ababa and Asmara are of high school level whereas the technical institute at Bahir Dar is an equivalent of a junior college. Students enroll in this institute at the completion of grade ten and stay there for four years.

Teacher Training Institutes

Speaking of the specialized schools, the teacher training institutes should be mentioned. There are five teacher training institutes in Ethiopia, and students are recruited to the institutes also after the completion of grade ten and receive academic and professional training for two years. Graduates of the teacher training institutes are qualified to teach in Ethiopian elementary schools. In spite of the short time training, the graduates from the institutes have been most effective in our elementary schools. The teacher training institutes will continue to be the main source of teachers for the elementary schools. The Ministry of Education also temporarily employs high school

graduates to teach in elementary schools because the graduates from the teacher training institutes are not enough to meet the demand for teachers at the elementary level. These people are upgraded to the level of the teacher training graduates during the summer months.

The teacher training institutes have their own peculiar problems. One of these is that the medium of instruction in the elementary schools is Amharic. More than 70 percent of the teachers in the institutes are foreigners. The trainees do their practice teaching in Amharic, but those who evaluate their performance during their practice teaching are non-Amharic speakers, and these people mainly depend on the facial expressions of the children. To say the least, this kind of evaluation is far from satisfactory.

Problems of Dropouts

Changing the former academic high schools into comprehensive high schools is one good move, provided they can be well equipped with the needed facilities and trained teachers, but this is not enough. There should be another good look at the whole system of education. At present, elementary schools prepare children for junior high school and the junior high schools prepare children for the senior high, and in senior high school students are prepared for college. We need to look at some of the figures to be convinced that this system is failing in

Ethiopia. At present only about 8 percent of school age children go to school. Let us now look at the attrition rate of elementary schools first and then the attrition rate of secondary schools.

PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS*

Year	No. of Students Enrolled in Grade 1	No. of Students Who Reached Grade 6	Percentage
1956	60,212	10,359	17.2
1957	61,447	11,305	18.4
1958	61,109	12,895	21.1
1959	65,119	15,669	21.1
1960	69,253	19,838	28.6
1961	68,141	23,186	34
1962	83,179	28,353	34.1

*The figures are taken from Dialogue, a publication of Ethiopian University Teachers Association. This study was done by Dr. Solomon Inquai of Haile Selassie I University and made public in an article written in Amharic. Vol. II, No. 1, 1968, p. 72.

This study of seven years enrollment and follow-up after five years shows that an average of only 25 percent of those who enroll in grade one reach grade six. Usually it is only about 80 percent of those in grade six go to grade seven and about 60 percent from grade eight go to grade nine. Therefore it is only about 40 percent of the 25 percent who reach grade six that can get into the senior high.

PUBLIC SENIOR HIGH SCHOOLS*

Year	No. of Students Enrolled in Grade 9	No. of Students Who Reached Grade 12	Percentage
1956	2 093	951	45.4
1957	2,984	851	28.5
1958	3,212	1,163	36.2
1959	3,088	1,244	40.3
1960	3,546	1,395	39.3
1961	4,280	2,199	51.4
1962	5,518	2,853	51.7
1963	6,718	3,390	50.2
1964	8,750	4,127	47.2

*Ibid., p. 73.

According to this study which involves nine years of enrollment in public senior high schools of Ethiopia, an average of 43.3 percent reach grade 12 after four years. Some students do drop out after reaching grade 12, but the number will be insignificant; the great majority stay in school to attempt the college entrance examination even though most of them know that they are not going to pass the five required subjects. Among the required subjects Amharic, English, and mathematics are compulsory. As a result of these examinations, only about 20 percent of those who reach grade 12 go to college. At present, students and educators do complain about examinations and especially

about the compulsory subjects. In my opinion, the complaints are valid because very few students are gifted in all subjects and these kinds of examinations are intended to curtail the number of enrollments in the national university rather than to test students' ability to follow college instructions. It seems to me that there is no reason why a person who fails in mathematics should not be admitted to the university to pursue higher education in the field of his choice other than mathematics. The university justifies the examinations because it operates under financial strains and it cannot admit all students who want to be admitted to the university. Examination is one device in selecting from the available candidates. On the part of students who want to go to the university, it is unfortunate that they do not have the opportunity to develop their potentials to the fullest extent. The university as a chartered institute is financed by the government and at present there are very few students who can afford to pay for their college education. In the long run, however, it is not only the individuals who lose but also the government, because the government for its development needs college graduates in different fields and passing in those compulsory subjects will be irrelevant in regard to performing one's duty effectively and efficiently. The point is that the government does not have enough money to spend on education from which quick results cannot be expected.

The examinations at the end of elementary school and junior high school (grade eight) are even less desirable as a means of eliminating children from schools. First of all, it is educationally unsound to turn away children from school at the age of 13 or 15 because they "fail" examinations which are intended to test achievement. Furthermore, the number of students who pass the examinations is determined by the available spaces rather than by the ability of the children to perform when they are promoted to the next grade, which means the main reason for the examinations is lack of schools. It seems that Ethiopia needs more schools and improved quality instruction in order to keep the children in school.

Out of the some 60,000 children who enrolled in grade one public schools in 1958, it is only about 1,000 who were admitted to Haile Selassie I University in 1970, which is less than 2 percent. It simply does not make much sense to concentrate on the 2 percent who go to college. This does not mean, however, that the 98 percent of the students are dropouts, because there are some who go to specialized schools like the technical, commercial, agricultural, and nursing schools. The number of students who go to these specialized schools is small, though exact figures for the ten-year period are not available at this time.

At present, since there are so many things which have to be done simultaneously, it is extremely difficult to establish meaningful priorities. Is the first priority more schools, in order to increase school enrollment for school age children? Is the first priority the change of policy so that students are being prepared for life in their own community rather than to go to college? Does this change of policy involve placing of students according to their interest and ability after completion of elementary school rather than wait until they reach senior high? Would another priority be strengthening the present set-up of comprehensive high schools so that students in these schools are sufficiently skilled that they can be eligible for employment after graduation? All the questions I have raised deserve immediate attention.

Apart from these, there should be greater emphasis on vocational education for rural development, and such vocational schools should be located in the rural areas. Establishing vocational education centers and teacher training institutes in rural Ethiopia has been planned by the Ministry of Education for a long time, but has never been put into practice, primarily because of shortage of funds. In order to make education effective in the rural areas for changing the peasants' attitude which has its root in "pre-scientific culture," scientific and technical education have to be given in the rural settings.

Change of Attitudes and Rural Development

In order to develop rural Ethiopia, there is a great need to change the attitude of the people. The people now think that improvement should always come from above. Therefore there is quite a bit of waiting for the government to bring about changes. One way of changing this attitude is by motivating educated people to live and work in villages and rural areas. This needs a great deal of conceptual adjustment and change of attitudes, because students who live in the country always think of going to school in order to get jobs with the government and live in cities. Since life in the rural areas is now so repelling, both parents and students look forward to the time when their way of life can be improved by moving to cities.[1] Very few people in the rural areas think that their lot can be improved in the country as farmers, because there was no precedence. In the past, they only saw people going to school in cities and getting jobs with the government and becoming successful. The idea of going to school in order to get a job with the government is as old as public schools in Ethiopia, and this attitude has been intensified since 1941.

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[1]For further information read Mesfin Wolde-Mariam, "The Rural Urban Split in Ethiopia," Dialogue, A publication of Ethiopian University Teachers Association, Vol. II, No. 1, 1968, pp 7-16.

In order to change the lives of the majority of Ethiopians through education, education policies must change. A more creative approach should be taken, not only to develop the potential of the individuals to its fullest extent but also to prepare young men and women for the available jobs as well as encouraging the creation of new jobs. School curricula should be relevant to the practical needs of urban and rural settings in Ethiopia; the subjects taught should be geared to improving living conditions and helping individuals live in their own communities without alienation. Some students have to be farmers, skilled technicians, social workers, nurses, etc. without going through the traditional curriculum. I do not think eight or ten years of history, geography, or mathematics is relevant to make a person a good nurse, a good social worker, a good technician, or a good farmer. In order to bring about effective change of urban and rural conditions, educators have to seek the largest possible participation of all segments of society.

In Ethiopia and other developing countries, schools should be a focal point in rural development as well as in changing the attitude of the people toward work, health, education, etc. whenever changes of this nature are necessary to improve living conditions. In Ethiopia, education cannot be disassociated from total economic development and

political maturity of the people, whether it is intended for this purpose or not. One of the basic problems of education in the past was that the various subjects were taught in isolation. Now, educators are trying to link adult literacy and adult education as a whole to social and physical environment as well as to the work of the individual participants. This effort of integrating education with economic and social development needs greater attention by developing countries.

Enrollment and Dropouts

In countries like Ethiopia, people worry a lot about the fact that only a small percentage (8% in Ethiopia) of school age population go to school. We worry a lot because the literacy rate is only 10 percent or 12 percent. These are, of course, relevant worries for any country which is concerned about the education of its people. However, it seems to me that the reasons for worrying about these things are not properly understood. In my opinion, we do worry about these things because we think individuals are denied opportunities in developing their potentials to the fullest extent so that they can pursue their own happiness in life. It seems to me that increasing school enrollment without reasonably curtailing the number of school dropouts does not result in the satisfaction and happiness of individuals concerned. In fact, going to school and then dropout has become a main source of

frustration for young men and women. Schools are being used in dislocating the youth. Bringing a person to school without giving him the tools needed either to live in the cities or in the rural areas does not serve any desirable goal. In Ethiopia, when only less than 2 percent of those who enroll in elementary school reach college and when very few of those who drop out get any kind of job, it seems legitimate to worry more about dropouts than about literacy rate and enrollment. Schools have alienated more and more people from the rural areas because after dropping out of school, going back to the farm is a sign of "failure." Young people do not want to face their relatives and friends in the rural areas as "failures."

There should be no argument whether enrollment or dropout is more important. The two problems are interrelated. In most cases, students drop out to make way for those who come in, and various examinations are used to do so. If there were enough schools in the country, the number of enrollment would be greater and the number of dropouts would be smaller. Students drop out because classes are overcrowded and teachers do not pay individual attention to children. In Ethiopia, individualization of instruction is a must if we are to make teaching effective, because children come from different language groups with different backgrounds and in most cases there is a great

variation as far as the ages of school children in the same class are concerned. Therefore, one of the basic answers for both enrollment and dropout is more and more schools with qualified teachers. In an era when education is the only hope to a better way of life in Ethiopia, it is impossible to slam the door to those who want to come to school. Both qualitative and quantitative education are necessary for the people to reach social and political maturity, which is essential for the progress of the country.

The problems of education in Ethiopia perhaps differ from the problems of other countries only in degree. Both developed and developing nations are concerned with problems of dropouts, effective training of teachers, the problems of allocation of human and material resources efficiently, and the problems of making education relevant to the needs of individuals and the society by making the experience of school rewarding. Educators all over the world are concerned with reconciling the values of the youth with the values of the older generation by reducing the so-called "generation gap." Since the concerns of nations as far as education goes are very similar, the solutions used in one country can be easily adapted in other countries, which means international cooperation in education can reduce the cost of education by reducing duplication of effort. Since most of the research findings

would be applicable to groups of countries with similar problems, developing countries need not spend their meager financial resources in planning and experimentation alone and get stuck when it comes to actual implementation. Coordination and exchange of research findings would minimize the cost of such educational spending. UNESCO's effort seems promising in this direction.

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